

The COMPASS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
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Relief for Strikers

A policy which social workers have long wished to see formulated has been incorporated in a formal letter of instruction to State Administrators by Harry Hopkins, Federal Relief Administrator. "Each case applying for relief to the local emergency relief agencies," says Mr. Hopkins, "should be treated on its merits as a relief case wholly apart from any controversy in which the wage earner may be involved."

Many times in the past both public and private agencies have provided relief to wage earners on strike but there have also been many examples of agencies which withheld relief and other services from strikers. Mr. Hopkins' ruling is a strong endorsement of the policy that withholding relief in case of a strike is a partisan rather than a neutral act. Coming at this time from a high national authority, the ruling should help to fix the policies and practices of social agencies in this respect. Chapters of the Association might well be alert to support the Administration policy and to see that it is incorporated in agency practice.

Exception to the rule was provided in Mr. Hopkins' letter in case of strikes which had been determined to be unreasonable and unjustified by the National Labor Board of the NRA. Such an exception may have seemed a necessary concession by one part of the government's recovery program to another. The exception so far, however, is largely an academic question and need not affect the efforts of social workers to see that the positive part of the ruling is carried out.

Juvenile Court Standards

A Committee on Selection and Qualification of Personnel has been appointed by the Pittsburgh Chapter to study the question of what personnel standards should be recommended for the newly created Juvenile Court. The Judge who has just been elected has promised to appoint an Advisory Committee of socially-minded individuals and the chapter believes it has an opportunity to make recommendations which will be accepted.

A. A. S. W. Members on Civil Service Lists

Results of important civil service examinations in New York State, published in *The Chief* for December 1, show that members of the Association made extremely good records. The highest rating in the examination for Assistant Commissioner of Social Welfare was secured by Rose McHugh, who stands first on the list. Glenn Jackson of Rochester is fourth on the list and Mrs. Marion Powers of Albany is seventh. Only eight candidates passed the examination, while 17 failed and 20 were rejected.

In the examination for Social Welfare Investigator, Department of Social Welfare, 12 of the 20 who passed are members of the Association and four of the 12 had the highest ratings, securing the first four places on the list. The members who passed the examination, together with their places on the list, are as follows: 1. Clara Rabinowitz, Brooklyn; 2. Leah Levy, New York; 3. Rhoda Starr, Albany; 4. Mary Bolton, Hartford; 7. Parker Norton, New York; 8. Jacob Fisher, New York; 9. Alice Berry, New York; 11. Mrs. Ruth McCann, Albany; 12. George Levinrew, New York; 13. Philip Ruby, Pleasantville, N. Y.; 14. Edith Casey, Hudson; 20. Mrs. Rebekah Sheppard, New York.

International Conference Delegates

Members of the A. A. S. W. recently appointed as official delegates to important conferences abroad include Sophonisba P. Breckinridge, Professor Joseph P. Chamberlain, George Warren and Florence Hutsinpillar.

Miss Breckinridge was appointed as the first woman delegate to a Pan-American Congress and sailed on November 11 for Montevideo with Secretary of State Hull as a member of the official U. S. delegation to the Congress. Subjects on the agenda for the Congress include better development of communications systems, organization of peace, international law, political and civil rights of women, social problems, and intellectual co-

operation.

Professor Chamberlain, George Warren, and Florence Hutsinpillar were appointed by President Roosevelt to represent the United States on a special committee of twelve governments recently appointed by the League of Nations to study the problem of assistance to aliens in various countries. They sailed on November 22 to attend the first conference on this subject in Geneva on December 4. The conference will consider the problem not only of the political and social refugee but the economic refugee as well. The plight of this last group has not received as much attention as that of the other two but is equally acute. Many aliens who are at present without means of self-support in their adopted countries would be glad to return to their own countries, but no provisions have been made so far by the various governments to enable them to do so and some countries do not want them to return.

The governments sending representatives to the Conference are Argentine, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, United States, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland and Mexico.

Broader Program for Federal Action Committee

A BROADER range of interest and activity relating to federal and state government social work programs was recommended by the Committee on Federal Action on Unemployment in a report discussed by the Executive Committee at its November meeting.

Recognizing that the active program conducted during the past two years by the Committee had been stimulated by the need for an adequate federal relief program, the Committee pointed out that the situation is now entirely different and that its function should be changed. Instead of massing information which could be used to stir a reluctant federal administration into action, it is now necessary to develop a broad and alert relationship to a wide range of programs which are under way and which are being pushed by the government with great energy and rapidity.

It was pointed out to the Executive Committee that since the Conference on Economic Objectives which was held in April by the Committee on Federal Action, several of the measures discussed have been incorporated into federal government programs. Formulation of a comprehensive and continuing governmental program, dealing with and tying together the necessary relief, pension, civil works, employment office, and unemployment insurance programs, has therefore been recognized by the Committee as

a major function. One of the most urgent problems, the Committee believes, is the substitution of some of the new standards in public welfare, which have been made possible because of federal action, for poor relief legislation of the Elizabethan pattern which still exists in this country. Other specific suggestions to which the Committee has been requested to give attention include commissaries and commodity distribution, the payment of rent as a continuing relief policy, public housing programs, the relation of health services to a relief program, relief to strikers, and subsistence homesteads.

With an expression of the appreciation of the whole Association for the work of the Committee during the past two years, the Executive Committee approved the report presented on behalf of the Committee on Federal Action by Linton B. Swift and authorized a change in title of the Committee to conform to the broader purpose. The Committee in the future will be known as the Committee on Federal Action in Social Welfare. Authorization was also given to the President in reappointing the Committee to broaden the geographical representation on the Committee as much as was found to be practicable. The following assignment was given to the Committee in conformity with its broader program:

"Its functions in general shall be to gather and analyze the experience and information of social workers upon federal government activities and related state government activities which the Committee deems most significant to the whole field of social work; to interpret its material to the appropriate governmental and private organizations; and to secure participation in the whole process from the chapters and membership of this Association."

Members of the Committee during the past year were: Linton B. Swift, chairman; Helen Crosby, secretary; Benson Y. Landis, Frank Bane, Allen T. Burns, C. C. Carstens, Joanna C. Concord, David H. Holbrook, Paul U. Kellogg, Harry L. Lurie, Rev. Dr. John O'Grady, Helen Hall, Ralph G. Hurlin, and William Hodson.

Chapter Urges Legislation

A rumor that it would probably be necessary to call a special session of the Illinois legislature no sooner reached the Chicago Chapter than the chapter sent a letter to the Governor urging that the call be made sufficiently broad to include two measures in which social workers in the state are particularly interested. The measures specified by the chapters are the certification bill which was drafted last year by the Chicago and Illinois

Chapters and a new Public Assistance Act which the chapters have endorsed and believe should be substituted for the present "Pauper Law" because it is more in accord with modern theories of relief and assistance and of state cooperation with federal authorities.

Shall Child Labor Be Permanently Abolished?

THE abolition of child labor is in sight if prompt action is taken by the states to ratify the child labor amendment. The Executive Committee of the A. A. S. W. voted at its last meeting to bring this issue to the attention of chapters in states where legislatures are meeting this year and which have not ratified the amendment, so that the chapters would be informed in case they wished to take action.

The present moment is a strategic one for those who believe in the amendment to support it as the protection given to children under the industrial codes is only temporary and will not be operative when the codes expire.

The child labor amendment, which was passed by Congress in 1924, sets no standards but gives Congress the right to enact legislation setting minimum standards for the employment of children up to 18 years of age. The amendment has already been ratified by 15 states, nine of which took this action in 1933 under the stimulus of the unemployment situation.

States in which regular sessions of the legislatures will be held this year are: Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Virginia. Special sessions have been called in three states—Iowa, Missouri, and Pennsylvania—and resolutions for the ratification of the amendment are pending at the present time in these special sessions.

Ratification by all of these states would not be sufficient to make the amendment effective this year but would bring adoption near enough so that the necessary additional action could probably be secured in 1935.

The 15 states which have already ratified the amendment are: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Detailed information about the amendment and about campaigns which are now under way may be secured from the National Child Labor Committee, 419 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

Cleveland Chapter at the Polls

The Cleveland Chapter had representatives at every one of the 1100 voting precincts in the county on Election Day, urging support of the 2½ mill tax levy for welfare and relief in the county. From 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. workers stood outside the booths in a cold and drizzling rain, giving out leaflets and asking voters to "vote yes on the Relief Levy." The effectiveness of their effort may be judged by the fact that the levy won by a majority of 725 votes!

The campaign of the Cleveland Chapter was begun by a huge mass meeting held at the end of the day in one of the downtown churches. The call to the meeting was sent to every social agency in the county and the entire staffs including clerical workers were urged to attend. Approximately 2000 persons were present and each one was given a card to sign and return before leaving the meeting, indicating the various social and civic groups to which he belonged and promising to help in the campaign by speaking, by service at the polls, by soliciting votes, or by acting as consultant when called upon. An intensive campaign was then carried on up to Election Day.

The struggle for the Welfare Levy was particularly difficult because of a law passed by the last legislature requiring a 65% majority for passing such a tax levy. The yield of the levy will be devoted chiefly to care of dependent children, tuberculosis patients, insane, indigent poor in hospitals, and soldiers' and sailors' relief.

Social Workers Testify on Crime Prevention

Social workers were called on to present testimony at recent hearings of the Senate Sub-Committee on Racketeering. This Committee, which had previously devoted its activities to the investigation of crime and the apprehension of criminals decided that it was important to consider what could be done in the guidance of parents and the education of the children and youth of the present generation in an attempt to stop crime at its inception.

The A. A. S. W. and a number of other social agencies were invited to testify at the hearings. Names of several social workers who could give valid testimony on the subject under discussion were suggested by the A. A. S. W. Among the social workers who testified were Sanford Bates, Owen R. Lovejoy, Alida Bowler, Henrietta Ad diton, Jane Hoey, John Slawson and R. K. Atkinson.

Christine Robb Joins National Staff

A FOUR year policy of the Executive Committee of the Association has culminated in the appointment of Christine C. Robb as an assistant executive secretary on the Association staff. Each year, the growth in membership has enabled the Association to live within its income, but only at the sacrifice of several enterprises and projects which were important for its development. For the last four years, therefore, the Executive Committee has set aside the small annual surplus, not because it wished to have the Association possess a balance in the bank, but because it recognized that the duties of the national office had expanded beyond the capacity of the existing staff, and that additional staff was the key to a more fruitful program for the Association.

The accumulated balance reached the sum of \$4,000 in the spring of this year, and the Executive Committee authorized the employment of an additional assistant to the Executive Secretary for as long as the \$4,000 would last. When the Committee met last month, the membership increase was so much greater than had been anticipated that the additional service was accepted as a permanent part of the Association set-up. In the meantime Miss Robb had been engaged and joined the staff November 20th.

With the assistance of Miss Robb, the Association expects to be able to furnish its members and its chapters much more competent service on subjects of professional interest. While the program of the Association has been framed for several years to supply information and to stimulate activity in the areas of major interest to professional social work, the lack of staff has resulted in abbreviated and incomplete service.

Since 1928, the membership of the Association has grown from 3800 to 8000. The number of chapters has increased from 36 to 59. Even with the addition of the necessary secretarial and clerical service, the national office staff has been unable to keep pace with this growth. It is the hope of the Executive Committee that much more stimulation to professional development will be forthcoming as a result of the additional time which will be available to the national office for chapter contacts, accumulation of material on the professional interests of members, a more interpretative COMPASS, and other channels of development open to the Association.

Miss Robb has been for several years Chief of Social Service of the Institute for Child Guidance of New York. When the Institute closed July 1, 1933, Miss Robb took on a special assignment for

the Joint Vocational Service, and just prior to her engagement with the Association, assisted Rose McHugh in a study of three protective programs in Buffalo.

Miss Robb has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Association for two years, and is a past president of the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers. Before her work with the Institute in New York City, she had been in hospital service, in a family society, with the American Red Cross, and with the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. With these various agencies, she has done social work in Indianapolis, St. Paul, Macon, Memphis, Richmond, and Cleveland.

Personnel Classification for Relief Agency

A classification of workers, together with specifications for each classification, has been recommended for the Cuyahoga County Relief Administration, Ohio. The recommendations were drawn up by a Committee on Classification of Workers, all of whom are members of the A. A. S. W., and are now being given final consideration by the Relief Administration, of which Stockton Raymond is the director.

The classifications and requirements suggested are:

- I. CASE WORKER: A worker with a minimum of two years training in a case work course in a school of social work. This includes family, medical, children's and psychiatric case workers.
- II. JUNIOR CASE WORKER: Student in training in a case work course at the School of Applied Social Sciences, Western Reserve University.
- III. SENIOR VISITOR
 - (1) A worker with professional training in other fields of social work.
 - (2) A worker with training in case work in a school of social work which does not meet the requirements called for under I.
 - (3) A visitor with three (3) years' experience with a family agency of recognized standing,

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the quality of whose work measures up to a high standard in the following:

- (a) Relationship to clients: Respect for the client as an individual, recognition of client's responsibility for his own affairs, and skill in the administration of relief.
- (b) Office mechanics: Promptness, accuracy, and neatness.
- (c) Office conduct: Relationship to other staff members, loyalty to the agency,

poise and desirable influence on other workers.

- (d) He should also display an interest in study and further preparation for the work.

IV. VISITOR: A field worker with no professional training in social work and with less than three years of experience with a family agency, or more than three except as he meets the requirements under III-3.

SALARY SCALE FOR RELIEF WORKERS

A standard salary scale for relief administration employees has been adopted by the Ohio State Relief Commission. The schedule, which is printed below, shows the classification of employees and the requirements for each classification as well as the salaries in counties of different

size. It will be noted that the state classifications differ somewhat from those recommended for the Cuyahoga County Relief Administration but that both specify professional training in a school of social work for those who are classified as case-workers.

SALARY SCHEDULE FOR COUNTY AND CITY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES TO BECOME EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 16, 1933

Type of Position	COUNTY POPULATIONS			Qualifications
	Over 500,000	250,000- 500,000	100,000- 250,000	
I. COUNTY DIRECTOR				
Minimum Salary.....	*	\$200.00	\$150.00	\$125.00
Average Salary.....		240.00	190.00	150.00
Maximum Salary.....		250.00	225.00	185.00
* Since only two Directors came under this classification, no recommendations were made.				
II. GENERAL SUPERVISION OF CASE WORK				
Minimum Salary.....	\$165.00	\$140.00	\$135.00	\$130.00
Average Salary.....	175.00	160.00	150.00	145.00
Maximum Salary.....	200.00	175.00	165.00	160.00
1. College graduate 2. Graduate of school of social work 3. Six or more years of experience 4. Successful adminis- trative experience				
III. CASE SUPERVISION				
Minimum Salary.....	\$130.00	\$130.00	\$130.00	\$130.00
Average Salary.....	145.00	145.00	145.00	145.00
Maximum Salary.....	160.00	160.00	160.00	160.00
1. College graduate 2. Graduate of school of social work 3. Four or more years of experience				
IV. SENIOR CASE WORKER (Case Worker Grade I)				
Minimum Salary.....	\$110.00	\$105.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Average Salary.....	125.00	115.00	110.00	110.00
Maximum Salary.....	140.00	130.00	125.00	125.00
1. College graduate 2. Graduate of school of social work 3. A minimum of three years of ex- perience in social work				
V. JUNIOR CASE WORKER (Case Worker Grade II)				
Minimum Salary.....	\$ 90.00	\$ 85.00	\$ 80.00	\$ 80.00
Average Salary.....	95.00	90.00	85.00	85.00
Maximum Salary.....	105.00	100.00	90.00	90.00
1. College graduate 2. Graduate of school of social work—or 3. A minimum of one year of experience in social work				
VI. AGENTS, VISITORS, INVESTIGATORS				
Minimum Salary.....	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00
Average Salary.....	85.00	80.00	75.00	75.00
Maximum Salary.....	90.00	85.00	80.00	80.00
1. Graduation from college or its equi- valent				
VII. STENOGRAPHERS				
Minimum Salary.....	\$ 75.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
Average Salary.....	80.00	75.00	70.00	65.00
Maximum Salary.....	85.00	80.00	75.00	70.00

Jobs for Training School Graduates

DO graduates of schools of social work still get jobs? This question was subjected to intensive study by the Association of Schools of Professional Social Work to help in clarifying a situation which the records of the Joint Vocational Service seemed to reveal a year ago. At that time the increase in number of candidates in proportion to number of positions available was very marked—1455 candidates for 214 positions as compared with 1046 candidates and 556 positions in 1930.

When this situation was brought to the attention of national functional agencies and the Association of Schools, the Executive Committee of the Association of Schools felt that a further study of the facts was essential before any conclusions could be drawn. A committee was appointed consisting of Frances Harrison, chairman; Margaret Leal and Edward Curran, to secure more detailed information from the J. V. S. regarding the qualifications of the registrants and their employment status. It was also decided to supplement these findings by a study of the placement records of the schools of social work for the same period.

Before the study of J. V. S. records was started, the group of 1455 candidates was reduced to 1160 by sending a letter asking the candidates if they were still interested in being actively registered at the J. V. S. Those who failed to respond were dropped from the active list. The qualifications of the 1160 active registrants were then analyzed to find out what their education, training and experience had been. On the whole, they were found to be a group with a good background, since 246 were graduates of schools of social work and 592 of the remaining 914 were college graduates, all but 43 of whom had had experience or some training or both.

The next step which had been planned in the study was a follow-up of the 1160 candidates to find out how many were actually employed. The necessary resources of time and money were not available for following up the entire group, so it was decided to limit this part of the study to the 246 graduates of training schools which would be supplemented by reports from the training schools on the employment status of all those who graduated between 1927 and 1932.

The findings of this part of the study are both illuminating and encouraging. When more information about the 246 training school graduates registered at J. V. S. was secured, it was found that only 71 of the 246 were actually unemployed or were expecting to be out of work within one month. A final check on this group

a month later showed only 16 actually unemployed who were interested in securing positions. No reply was received from 28, while 21 were employed and six were unemployed through preference.

The supplementary information secured from the member schools of the A. S. P. S. W. showed the employment situation to be even more favorable. Nineteen of the 24 schools were able to report on their graduates from 1927 to 1932 inclusive. These reports showed 1949 graduates of whom 71% were employed in social work, 7% otherwise employed and 2% engaged in further study. Those unemployed totalled 318 or 16%, but only 27 of this number or 1.4% of the 1949 were unemployed *because positions were not available*. The largest number, 204 of the 318, were unemployed through choice.

Twenty-three schools were able to supply detailed reports on 593 graduates who completed their courses in 1932. This information was desired particularly because the J. V. S. had reported difficulty in placing training school graduates without previous experience. No special difficulty of this sort was indicated in the reports from the schools. Only 65 of the 593 graduates (11%) were unemployed and of these only 10 or 1.7% of the 593 were unemployed *because no positions were available*.

Definite data on the general employment or unemployment situation in social work are still lacking. The J. V. S. does not know what per cent of applicants registered with them are actually unemployed, nor how many who are unemployed do not register, nor what per cent of all available positions are registered with them. The one thing that is clear as a result of this study is that graduates of training schools in recent years (1927-32) evidently have little difficulty in securing positions and this knowledge is of considerable importance. If another study could be made showing both the extent to which social workers have been thrown out of employment through the curtailment or discontinuance of the type of service in which they have been engaged and also the extent to which employed social workers register with the J. V. S. as a result of dissatisfaction with present working conditions (low salaries, overtime, curtailed vacations, etc.), a comprehensive picture of present employment conditions among social workers would be available.

High Cost of Moving

Social workers are on the move these days, as our mounting cost of address changes reveals. Approximately 400 members a month want their addresses changed, and if this continues through

the year the cost to the Association will be about \$1000.

Members will have no difficulty in thinking of ways in which this \$1000 might be used to the advantage of the membership if it didn't have to be spent on changing addresses. Cooperation in the two following ways will help to reduce the bill very materially:

1. If you move, send us your new address promptly and if possible before the 15th of the month. This will enable us to make the change in our mailing list before the COMPASS (or bills!) are sent to you. If you fail to inform us, mail goes to your old address and we have to pay the post office two cents for the information that you have moved. Frequently we get incorrect information in return for the two cents.

2. If you move but are uncertain how long you will remain at your new address, send us, if possible, a permanent address where we may send your mail for one year. Members frequently ask us to make four or five changes a year without realizing how the cost mounts up in an organization with 8000 members.

Are the Gains to Be Permanent?

The most important thing about the Federal Relief program is to get relief to those who need it. Next to that is the likelihood that the government's attitude on relief standards and relief policies will convince the states and local governments that the key to any advance in standards of relief practice is the continued employment of qualified social workers. As better methods are accepted and as communities are convinced of the use of qualified personnel, the present federal program will have a lasting and constructive effect on the whole problem of relief in this country for years to come.

Experience with enlightened relief practice and with skillful social workers will undoubtedly be convincing to many communities. Social workers, however, must bear in mind that the gains made so far have been superimposed by high authority, and that many other communities would quickly fall back on habitual methods if federal and, in some instances, state influence were withdrawn.

The following quotations from an article which appeared recently in the *Indianapolis Times* exemplify some of the ways in which present gains would be attacked:

"William H. Book, director of the Governor's Commission on Unemployment Relief, will be dictator of poor relief this winter with power to order the 1,110 township trustees to do his bidding, under State Administration plans disclosed today. . . .

"The whole program is being bitterly contested by many trustees who claim that political appointees are better than social workers for the investigation jobs and that the political system is less costly than the new plan. . . .

"Old line politicians declare that a housewife who has been a good party worker is better equipped to tell what a family needs than spinsters trained from books or schools. . . .

"While the investigation staff has already been increased fifty per cent, more are to be added, Mr. Book said. It will mean better relief work and in the long run economy, he asserted. . . .

"This view is challenged by politicians, some of whom are predicting that it will cost \$20,000 a year more for administration."

Some Information About Dues

DO YOU KNOW THAT—

If you are anxious to retain your membership in the Association BUT your salary has not been paid or you have been ill or are out of a job, the Executive Committee is glad to make an adjustment to enable you to meet your dues at a later date?

More members than usual are on the list to be dropped for non-payment of dues. The Association does not want to lose interested members whose finances are temporarily disrupted and will gladly cooperate to assist them in maintaining their memberships.

If you are reluctant to lose your affiliation with the Association but cannot meet your dues for the present, you are urged to write to the national office to arrange for an extension of time.

More Chapters

Two new chapters of the Association were authorized by the Executive Committee in November, bringing the total number of chapters to 59, seven of which have been admitted during 1933.

Eighteen Delaware members of the Association signed a request for authorization of a chapter with state-wide jurisdiction after discussion of chapter prospects with Betsey Libbey, who was guest speaker of the meeting. Miss B. Ethelda Mullen was chosen temporary chairman pending acceptance of the chapter by the national Executive Committee.

Eleven members of the Association in Nashville voted to organize a chapter with jurisdiction over Davidson County, Tennessee. Elizabeth W. Nairn has been elected chairman; Elizabeth Hite, vice-chairman; Anna L. Stille, secretary-treasurer, and Herbert Kohn and Fannie B. Elrod were chosen to serve on the executive committee with the officers.

DISMISSEALS AND UNIONS IN CHICAGO

FIVE social workers have been dismissed from the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare by the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission without a hearing, without notice and without indicating the cause. A sixth worker, a member of the clerical staff, was also dismissed but has been reinstated with the explanation that a mistake had been made in her identity. As far as it has been possible to determine since their dismissal, the five social workers were removed because of alleged participation in activities of the Communist Party.

The Chicago Chapter has sent a letter to the Chairman of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission protesting this action on the ground that summary action of this kind is contrary to sound administrative procedure, that civil service employees should be subject to dismissal only after a hearing and for cause, which would not include affiliation with a legal political party, and that the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare is competent to handle the selection and dismissal of its personnel.

The chapter's letter is given in full below:

616 So. Michigan Avenue,
Chicago, Ill.,
November 28, 1933.

Mr. R. J. Dunham, Chairman,
Illinois Emergency Relief Commission,
R. 640, 10 So. La Salle Street,
Chicago, Ill.

My dear Mr. Dunham:

The Chicago Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers at its regular meeting on Monday, November 27, 1933, considered the summary dismissal of a number of employees of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, and authorized a committee to make representation to the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission, and to take any other appropriate action looking toward a modification of the policy and procedure of the Commission relative to discharge of personnel.

Representation is being made on the assumption that you and your fellow members of the Commission wish to be fair and just to the employees, and that you would be willing to reconsider and rectify any action if same were shown to be an error. We are encouraged in believing this by your prompt reinstatement of one of the employees whose dismissal you recognized to be a mistake.

According to the information available to the chapter, the employees referred to were dismissed by the Commission without a hearing, without notice, and without indicating the cause. Subsequently, we are informed, they were given as reason for dismissal their alleged sympathy with and participation in Communistic activities, which when given the chance they denied. If our information is substantially correct, we must take exception to the Commission's action, which we believe is contrary to sound administrative procedure. Dismissals of this nature must be demoralizing to the whole personnel of the service and must result in serious impairment of efficiency.

Your action seems to us particularly unfortunate coming as it does from a governmental agency. Such action is manifestly unjust to the employees involved, not alone on account of the loss of employment, upon which they depend for a livelihood at present, but even more so because of the reflection upon their usefulness in the future.

We believe that the policy of the Commission as indicated in the case of the discharges referred to is contrary to the right and freedom of individuals to belong to any legal political party and to hold any political, economic, and social views granted by the fundamental laws of the United States and of the State of Illinois. The employees in question, like other employees of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, have been selected on the principle of civil service, and they should not be subjected to dismissal without hearing, and then only on account of cause, such as neglect of duty, inefficiency, or the commitment of an overt act against the laws of this land. In this connection we would like to draw your attention to the expressed policy of the Federal administration according to which there is to be no discrimination in our recovery program on the ground of political affiliation or membership in a union.

The chapter has already expressed its full confidence in the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare which was selected by the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission to act as its agent for the administration of relief in Cook County and wishes again to express the belief that the Bureau can be depended upon to deal fairly and intelligently with the problems both of selection and dismissal of its own social work personnel.

The Committee wishes an opportunity of meeting with you at your earliest convenience to discuss these matters.

Very sincerely yours,

JOSEPHINE MURPHY,
Secretary.

Previous to this, the chapter had gone on record in another letter to the Chairman of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission as believing in the freedom of action and opinion of its own members and the "right of individuals to organize for the protection of their interests without endangering their status as employees in public or private organizations provided that the activities are not of such a nature as to impair the usefulness of the individual worker or of the organization."

This action followed the publication by the Social Workers Discussion Group of a proposed code for social service workers and a meeting called by this group to discuss the formation of a Social Service Workers Union to put the code into effect.

After studying the proposed code, the chapter decided to send a letter to the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission which would make it clear that the chapter and the Social Workers Discussion Group are different organizations with different aims and methods but that nevertheless the

chapter is sympathetic with many of the principles formulated in the code and believes strongly in the principle of non-interference in the individual's rights. Accordingly the following letter was sent to the Commission:

"The Chicago Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers desires to make a statement at this time in respect to the code proposed by the Social Workers Discussion Group. The chapter wishes to make clear that the Association and the Discussion Group are not identical, although individual social workers hold membership in both, and that the aims and methods are necessarily different, since membership in the Social Workers Discussion Group is open to every class of employee, while membership in the Association is restricted to those possessing the necessary qualifications for professional social work.

"The chief aims of the American Association of Social Workers are:

"(a) To improve the standards of social work in order to make the profession more useful to those it serves and to the community in general.

"(b) To protect the interests of social workers and to improve conditions under which they work. This implies adequate compensation, security in the job, and satisfactory conditions of work such as adequate vacations, opportunity for self-improvement, and a case load which is compatible with the best services both to worker and client.

"(c) To recognize social work as a profession and to further professional principles and standards.

"The Chicago Chapter of the Association is deeply concerned about the standards of work and protection of the worker in the social service of public agencies financed through public funds. The chapter has been consistently on record in favor of strict adherence to the principles and methods of civil service in the selection and protection of social work personnel.

"The Chicago Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers is in sympathy with many of the principles formulated in the code of the Social Workers Discussion Group. It must disapprove, however, the methods pursued by the Social Workers Discussion Group to the extent to which these practices jeopardize the standards that have already been attained in both public and private agencies and retard further progress and recognition of social work. The chapter wishes to go on record that it believes in the freedom of action and opinion of its own members. It believes in the right of individuals to organize for the protection of their interests without endangering their status as employees in public or private organizations, provided that the activities are not of such a nature as to impair the usefulness of the individual worker or of the organization. It has been a long established principle in public service that it is unethical for civil service employees to participate publicly in political activities.

"The Illinois Emergency Relief Commission has selected the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare as its agent for the administration of relief in Cook County. The chapter wishes to express its full confidence in the administration of the County Bureau of Public Welfare. The present administration of the Bureau can be depended upon to deal effectively

and intelligently with the personnel in its service. The Director of the Bureau has shown a real awareness of the problems confronting the relief service, including that of method of selection for personnel."

An analysis of the code drawn up by the Social Workers Discussion Group was made by a member of the chapter as a basis for chapter discussion. The code is concerned only with standards for the protection of the worker and four classifications of workers are proposed. In the analysis it was pointed out that greater differentiation in the classifications would probably be necessary as the classifications are too general and in some cases too miscellaneous. Group I includes all social workers "having direct dealings with and responsibility for clients," including senior caseworkers, case aids carrying loads, group workers, insurance men, property men, nutrition and medical workers, and vocational workers, all of whom are to receive a minimum salary of \$150 a month with no beginning qualifications stated. Group II is composed of social workers "not having responsibility for clients" and the minimum salary for this group is \$125. Group III and IV are composed of clerical and maintenance workers with a minimum salary of \$100. Automatic annual increases of 10% of the minimum salary are specified for all four groups for the first five years of service. In the analysis presented to the Chicago Chapter it was pointed out that under this scale an inexperienced person taken on in Group I would receive \$225 at the end of five years and that not all workers, including some of those with professional training, would be sufficiently mature at the end of five years to justify this salary.

The code sets a maximum limit for caseloads per worker of 75 in relief agencies and 35 in service agencies. The wisdom of attempting to set caseloads at the present time was questioned in the analysis of the code on the basis that there is a marked trend toward division of caseload between problem cases and cases of involuntary unemployment and that not enough is known yet about such a division to specify what would be a reasonable caseload in each group.

Other provisions in the code include a seven-hour day and a five-day week for the four groups of workers, one month's vacation after a year of service, free clinic and hospital care, three hours per week for further education, the right of workers to join any organization without discrimination against them because of such membership, and the right of workers to participate through representatives of their own choosing in the formulation of personnel practices and agency policies.

THE SOCIAL WORKER READS THE MORNING'S NEWS

National Industrial Board Reports; Labor Federation Reports; Ex-Governor of New York Denounces Civil Works; Public Works Administration Replies; Building Unions Seek Code Changes; P. W. A. Surveys Projects; State Relief Survey Notes Gains and Outlines Improvements; Family Relief Drive Outlines Plans and Relates Itself to Recovery.

ON the morning of December 1st as on every other morning for many months, the social worker either got up earlier or carried out of the train the unread sections of his morning paper in an effort to relate himself and his work to current history. Probably he had time only for a glance at the headlines on international relations.

"Gain in Wages Less Than Living Cost Rise" necessarily caught his eye, and he read a summary of the report of the National Industrial Conference Board. He noted side by side the figures on increased employment, shorter working hours, higher wages and still higher living costs. He probably read in full the concluding statement: "It must be clear that the salient fact in the status of the employed worker in comparison with July has been his reduction of hours. His purchasing power, his command over the things needful for living, has not increased. On the other hand, there has been a greater gain in the number of employed workers than would have taken place without codes and agreements in a situation of slackening production."

"Industrial Pick-Up Wider in November" in another column led to a report of the Labor Federation on a monthly survey of business, stating "employment holding up in usually dull season; heavy industries liven." The social worker noted "payroll totals—moving upward"; "farmers' buying power—increased"—together with government hog purchases and other bonuses; department store and other sales increased; automobile production stepped up; "building contracts—due to public works," and upturn of lumber production and electric power basic to recovery in the "heavy" industries. There followed warnings against "uncontrolled inflation" with which the economists continue to struggle.

But on the first news page the ex-Governor of one State denounced Civil Works Plan and Secretary Ickes, Public Works Administrator, took issue with his judgment! Glancing back, the social worker found the ex-Governor calling Civil Works an inadequate substitute for a failing public works program and insisting that the public works program would be just as unprepared in February, when the Civil Works program ends,

as it was today. He summarized this in the following paragraph: "I have the greatest possible sympathy with increasing the wages of present underpaid relief workers . . . putting more men to work . . . am for a five-day week . . . and for paying skilled laborers the prevailing rate . . . but I cannot see how worthwhile projects midway between public works and made work can be devised overnight. . . . This program certainly cannot benefit the heavy industries . . . cannot produce between now and February 15th . . . will lead the localities to dump their entire relief problem on the central government . . . will discourage the private building industry . . . will dislocate wages . . . will certainly afford an alibi for the incompetents in the Public Works Administration and perpetuate delay. . . ."

Beyond, Secretary Ickes in a reply stated, "The Civil Works Administration was a logical development of the Public Works program . . . it was designed to and in fact is taking up the slack in employment that in the nature of things the Public Works Administration could not hope to reach."

And on another page, Secretary Ickes reported on the survey conducted by the PWA of the projects for which allotments have been made, declaring "money is used for needed public works in every State," putting men to work and affording needed facilities to communities. Figures and types of projects and allotments followed to support the statements.

A little beyond was an account of the building unions' interest in modifications of the newly proposed code in the construction industry. This article pointed out that the unions would continue to press for inclusion of minimum wages for skilled workers; pointed out that the proposed NRA code scored one point in favor of labor in that the construction league was not mentioned in the document; objected to the provision for broader investigation as being not sufficiently drastic, etc., etc., and proposed a planning committee for the enforcement of fair practices and the settlement of labor disputes. Objection was made that no child labor clause was included in the NRA code.

The social worker looked up from the newspaper. There were obvious differences of opinion. There was something common to all: an apparent sincerity of purpose and social consciousness. Politicians, organized labor, fact-finding bodies and others were speaking to similar points. The trends were obvious. A great public and an interested social worker must certainly

watch constantly the working out of many ways and means of shifting goals and accomplishing purposes if as citizens and professional people they were to relate themselves intelligently to the total structure.

Otherwise the items more familiar to the social worker appearing on the next pages might lose considerable significance today and tomorrow:

In one column a Citizens Family Welfare Committee outlined its organization for collecting funds for relief and unemployment to be dispersed through the private family agencies and ended: "As evidence that the family welfare agencies who are to do the special relief work . . . have an important task to perform . . . the director of the State Employment Service pointed out that a considerable number of unemployed men and women seeking federal civil works jobs would require some sort of rehabilitation before they can accept permanent reemployment opportunities. A survey among the branch registration offices . . . disclosed that many . . . were burdened with complicated family difficulties. While the hopes of these persons still rested on employment, for many, it seemed, a considerable amount of adjustment to economic shortcomings must be rendered by persons skilled in smoothing out domestic problems. Months of persistent unemployment had left the scars of malnutrition, depression-worn clothing, and attitudes of resignation to a long-continued plight." Here is a statement, easily understood by the social worker, on the importance of privately organized social work to meet needs that cannot be met by publicly organ-

ized relief at this point.

And in another column a report on the Advance in Relief in one State was given, with evidence of thoughtful criticism in the statement, "though perfection is not attained, the service reveals remarkable gains in many States." It was a brief for clearly defined duties of the staff, for well-trained social workers, small case loads, training developments, expert services on home economy, improved operation on rent allowances, etc.

Last minute reports for the social worker indicate that in New York City the "new administrator plans to retain most of the personnel of the former City Emergency Work and Relief Bureau as the Civil Works Administration opens," and that Mrs. Roosevelt has expressed concern because "the minimum wage scale for skilled labor on civil works is not being applied to skilled educational and relief services on projects payable from local, state or federal relief funds."

The social worker cannot read the morning news today without a vivid realization that he must somehow be ready to define and redefine his position in relation to the whole economic and governmental structure. It is impossible for him to confine himself to his own case load or to the limitations of past professional training. Here are new responsibilities, new insight into causes and new machinery for dealing with them, side by side with what the social worker has regarded heretofore as "normal" social welfare activities. No one knows how much of the new has come to stay.

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THE COMPASS

November, 1933

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